

Spice Up Your Life!

Eat Less Salt and Sodium



NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
NATIONAL HEART, LUNG, AND BLOOD INSTITUTE
AND OFFICE OF RESEARCH ON MINORITY HEALTH



Why should you eat less salt and sodium?

You should cut back on salt and sodium in your diet to help prevent or lower high blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure lowering it can reduce your chances of heart disease and stroke.



Did you know....

Table salt is made up of two compounds—sodium and chloride. Most of the sodium in your diet comes from processed foods. The remaining comes from the salt added at the table, and salt added while cooking. Limit the amount of sodium that you consume from all these sources to no more than 2,400 milligrams (mg) each day which is equal to about 1 teaspoon of salt.



Tips to Eating Less Salt and Sodium

Be a smart shopper.

- **Read the food label** to find out more about what is in the foods you eat. This will help you choose foods to limit the amount of sodium you eat to 2,400 mg each day.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 cup (228 g)	
Serving Per Package 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 260	Calories from fat 120
	(% Daily Value)
Total Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 600mg	28%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 2%	
Calcium 15% • Iron 4%	
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

• **Size up your food.** Compare the amounts you will eat to the serving size given. If you eat 2 cups and the serving size is 1 cup, you have to double the amounts of nutrients and calories listed.

• **Read the nutrition information.** Use the Percent Daily Value to compare the amount of sodium among brands. Choose those foods that have lower values. One serving of this product contains 28 percent, or about 1/4 of the amount of sodium you should have for the entire day.

- **Buy foods with these claims more often.** The food label may include terms such as:
 - sodium free very low sodium
 - low sodium reduced (or less) sodium
 - light in sodium unsalted

Choose More Often:

Chicken and turkey (take off skin)

Lean cuts of meat

Fish: Fresh or frozen

Skim or 1% milk, evaporated skim milk

Cheese: lower or reduced in sodium

Loaf breads, dinner rolls, English muffin, bagels, pita, and salt-free chips

Cereals: some hot cereals and some ready-to-eat cold cereals lowest in sodium*

Plain rice and noodles

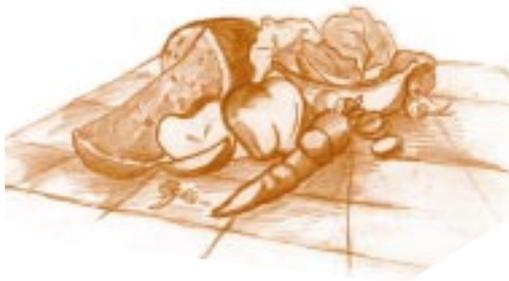
Fresh, frozen, or no salt added canned vegetables

Fruits

Soups: lower or reduced in sodium

Margarine, vegetable oils

Spices, herbs, and flavorings like oregano, garlic powder, onion powder, salt free seasoning blends, vinegar, and fruit juices





Choose Less Often:

Hogmaws, ribs, and chitterlings

Smoked or cured meats like bacon, bologna, hot dogs, ham, corned beef, luncheon meats, and sausage

Canned fish like tuna, salmon, sardines, and mackerel**

Buttermilk⁺

Most cheese spreads and cheeses

Salty chips, nuts, pretzels, or pork rinds

Some cold (ready to eat) cereals highest in sodium, instant hot cereals

Quick cooking rice and instant noodles, boxed mixes like rice, scalloped potatoes, macaroni and cheese,⁺⁺ and some frozen dinners, pot pies and pizza*

Regular canned vegetables**

Pickled foods like herring, pickles, relish, olives, or sauerkraut

Regular canned soups, instant soups

Butter, fatback, and salt pork

Soy sauce, steak sauce, salad dressing, ketchup, barbecue sauce, garlic salt, onion salt, seasoned salts like lemon pepper, bouillon cubes, meat tenderizer, and monosodium glutamate (MSG)*

*Read the food label to choose those lower in sodium.

**Rinse canned fish or vegetables before using.

+Although buttermilk is high in sodium, 1 percent or skim buttermilk can be used in cooking to replace whole milk or fat.

++Modify cooking directions and prepare with less salt, if possible.

Go easy in the kitchen.

- **Use less salt and seasoned salt when you cook.**
 - Use spices and herbs or low sodium seasonings like sodium free bouillon or onion powder, garlic powder, and sodium free seasoning blends.

Try these:

- Sprinkle lemon juice over vegetables.
- Season or marinate meat, poultry, and fish ahead of time with onion, garlic, and your favorite herbs before cooking to bring out the flavor.



- **Take steps to make meals lower in salt and sodium.**

- Use smoked or salt-cured meat products only in small amounts for flavoring.
- Prepare fresh lean pork roast instead of country ham.
- Rinse canned vegetables and fish such as tuna to remove some sodium.





Take the lead at the table.

- Remove the salt shaker. Keep the pepper shaker.
- Taste the food first. If you must add salt, use one “shake” instead of two or more.
- Cut down on the amount of salty prepared sauces or condiments you use.

Be in control at the restaurant.

- Choose foods without sauces. If you prefer, ask for sauce and salad dressing to be served “on the side.”
- Ask for your meal to be prepared without salt or monosodium glutamate (MSG). Then if you must, you can add a small amount of salt.





Check the things you will do to eat less salt and sodium.

- Read food labels. Choose foods that have the lowest Percent Daily Value for sodium. Also buy foods that are labeled “reduced sodium,” “low sodium,” “sodium free,” or “no salt added.”
- Buy fruits and vegetables for snacks. Choose chips, crackers, or nuts that are lower in sodium.
- Take the salt shaker off the table.
- Choose no salt added regular canned vegetables, vegetable juices, soups, sauces, and gravies. Most frozen vegetables without sauces are low in sodium.
- Choose fresh or frozen lean cuts of meat, fish, and poultry.
- Season your food with herbs and spices instead of salt.



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